

Washington Park Arboretum

BULLETIN



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— Washington Park Arboretum —

The Arboretum is a 230-acre living museum displaying internationally renowned collections of oaks, conifers, camellias, Japanese maples, hollies and a profusion of woody plants from the Pacific Northwest and around the world. Aesthetic enjoyment gracefully co-exists with science in this spectacular urban green space on the shores of Lake Washington. Visitors come to learn, explore, relax or reflect in Seattle's largest public garden.

The Washington Park Arboretum is managed cooperatively by the University of Washington and Seattle Parks and Recreation; the Arboretum Foundation is its major support organization.

— Graham Visitors Center —

Open 10 AM—4 PM daily;
holidays, NOON—4 PM.

Closed Thanksgiving and the Friday after,
Christmas and New Year's Day.

The Arboretum is accessible by Metro bus #43 from downtown Seattle and the University of Washington campus

— Arboretum Foundation —

The Arboretum Foundation is a nonprofit organization established in 1935 to ensure stewardship for the Washington Park Arboretum and to provide horticultural leadership for the region. The Foundation provides funding, volunteer services, membership programs and public information in support of the Arboretum, its plant collections and programs. Volunteers operate the gift shop, conduct major fund-raising events, and further their gardening knowledge through study groups and hands-on work in the greenhouse or grounds.

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Washington Park Arboretum

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Center for Urban Horticulture

John A. Wott, Ph.D., Acting Director

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The City of Seattle owns the Arboretum's land, including the buildings. Seattle Parks and Recreation is responsible for routine maintenance within the Arboretum and manages and operates the Japanese Garden.

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ABOVE: Arboretum paths in autumn greet visitors with a kaleidoscopic panoply of red, purple, gold and bronze tones. For an engaging tour of Arboretum fall color, turn to page 12.

ON THE COVER: Photographer Tom Dark of Peshastin won first prize in the Arboretum Photo Contest “Japanese Garden” amateur category with this shot, “Scenic Pathway.” More information about the contest and other winning photographs may be found on page 17.

Thank you, John Wott!

In this issue we celebrate the tenure of John A. Wott, Ph.D., Washington Park Arboretum Director, and he shares with readers some of his most beloved spots in the Arboretum as well as a little history. Wott has been integral to the everyday workings of the Washington Park Arboretum for 11 years and is currently Director of the Arboretum and Acting Director of the Center for Urban Horticulture. During these years, he has seen change and progress, not only on the grounds, but also amongst all parties who work so diligently to preserve, enhance and protect the Arboretum.

Wott's challenges over the years have included managing a site which has three very active administrative partners, the University of Washington, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and the Arboretum Foundation; helping move a new master plan forward to approval; and dealing with the challenge of ever-shrinking budgets and the accompanying staff shortage. He is known for his engaging talks that both educate and rally his audience. Wott recently participated in a new adventure with the gardening public: a booth at the FlorAbundance plant sale called "Ask the Arboretum." People lined up for a chance to ask questions about the Arboretum and to speak with experts about plants and pests. Wott was an enormous hit!

Last year, the University of Washington embarked upon an international search for a new Director of both the Arboretum and the Center for Urban Horticulture. When the position is filled and the new Director is on-



"Autumn/Magnolia Leaves" by photographer Linda K. Schwartz of Mountlake Terrace garnered first prize in the Arboretum Photo Contest amateur "Seasons" category (see page 17).

site, Wott will primarily teach at the Center. We at the Arboretum Foundation appreciate all that John Wott has done for the Arboretum. And while change is inevitable in our lives, we expect that he will remain an active Arboretum supporter and plant sale volunteer! ~

Deborah Andrews, Executive Director,
Arboretum Foundation

Pools of Narcissus— Choose Some to Perennialize

BY BOB LILLY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LYNNE HARRISON

Nrobably the most rewarding of fall-planted bulbs are the narcissus, known to many of us as daffodils or jonquils. If we choose narcissus carefully, we can admire veritable pools of them, just as Narcissus of Greek myth did

when he fell in love with his reflection and couldn't cease admiring his own image. To have pools of narcissus to admire in your garden, choose among the varieties and cultivars that will increase well in most locations and give them just a little bit of extra care.

The Northwest Perennial Alliance border at the Bellevue Botanical Garden features an impressive perennial display of *Narcissus* 'Pipit,' a ribbon of sunlight behind primroses, tulips and other spring bulbs.



Location

Narcissus grow best in full sun, but most will do well under deciduous shrubs or trees in a site with morning or afternoon sun. Well-drained fertile garden soil or a sandy loam is fine. *Narcissus 'Salome'* will perform well in wet winter and spring soil, an exception to the usual rule.

Depth

In the garden, bulbs should be planted about as deep as three times the measurement of their diameter. In heavier soils, they can be planted a bit shallower. I have found that about two times the bulb's diameter is fine if heavy manure or compost mulch is applied after planting.

Feeding

Plant narcissus with bulb food mixed in the soil under the bulbs, and if planting narcissus in pots, always use some fertilizer. For pot culture, bulb food should be mixed into the soil in the bottom of the pot and then a little bit of fresh soil should be added on top so the bulbs' roots don't burn. Bulbs should then be placed about halfway down in the pot and covered with soil. In pots, root space is more important than the depth the bulbs are planted.

Increase

To perennialize narcissus, use the following varieties and most importantly, do a spring feeding. This should be done when the foliage is up 2 to 3 inches. Use a commercial bulb food or a vegetable food with a 5-10-10 (NPK) nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium ratio. If you wish to use an organic food, go a little heavier on the application. Scatter the fertilizer on the soil amongst the emerging bulb foliage at about a handful for every two square feet. You are feeding next year's bulb, which grows from this year's foliage—in other words, *making* them "perennialize." (The term *naturalize* actually refers to perennials that



Narcissus 'Salome' has blue-green foliage, a white corolla and orange cup which fades to pink. In addition, it will grow in wet ground.

spread by seeding about, which most narcissus do not do.)

Narcissus increase through growth of individual bulbs and through "splitting," which increases the number of bulbs in the clump. As long as clumps continue to bloom well, there is no need to divide them to give them more space.

Leaves

You must let narcissus foliage ripen to gold or brown before removal. Some references say leaves can be removed as soon as they begin to turn yellow, but this is too soon in our climate, since most of our growing locations are less than ideal. The dead foliage need not be removed if you have perennials that grow up and cover the mess.

Flowers

Although most narcissus do not set seed, it is best to remove the spent flowers by cutting off just below the dried paper-like sheath. Do not cut the flower stems off as they also feed next year's bulb.

Although almost all *Narcissus* cultivars do well in the Pacific Northwest, I have found the following varieties do extremely well. *Narcissus* cultivars are assigned to one of 12 divisions according to flower type. In the list below, the division follows the cultivar name.



Narcissus 'Jenny' grows well, even in the partial shade of this old apple tree.

- **'Avalon'**—**Large-Cupped**. With creamy yellow flowers of a very heavy substance and wide blue foliage, this is a newer variety.
- **'Baby Moon'**—**Jonquilla**. This narcissus is multi-flowered and extremely fragrant with small yellow blossoms; it is the last to bloom.
- **'Carlton'**—**Large-Cupped** and **'Dutchmaster'**—**Trumpet**. Both of these choices are good, strong bulbs if you want a bright yellow 'King Alfred' look.
- **'Cheerfulness'** and **'Yellow Cheerfulness'** are **Double**. They are multi-flowered with heavy fragrance and should be used in a sunny location. Their flowers are about the size of a fifty-cent piece.
- **'February Gold'**—**Cyclamineus**. This selection has a smaller, butter-yellow, trumpet-like flower; it is extremely hardy and floriferous, will make large colonies and blooms early.
- **'Ice Follies'**—**Large-Cupped**. Creamy yellow, fading to pale yellow, 'Ice Follies' has a frilly, wide cup; if grown in full sun and fed well, it will form large colonies.
- **'Jet Fire'**—**Cyclamineus**. This narcissus looks like a small version of 'February Gold' with an orange trumpet; it blooms very late and is best in full sun.
- **'Pipit'**—**Jonquilla**. Yellow and cream with narrow leaves and a long stem, this fairly late bloomer will make immense clumps; it is a very good perennializer.
- **'Rip Van Winkle'**—**Double**. With short blue foliage and a very double, yellow flower with

narrow petals, this narcissus is a good increaser but needs full sun. All the doubles are fairly successful in the garden, as long as they have good sun. There are some clumps in California, in gold rush territory, that have been in place for 100 years or more.

■ **'Salome.'** This **Large-Cupped** narcissus has a white corolla and a pale orange cup that fades to pink; it will grow in wet ground and has wide, bluish foliage.

■ **'Topolino'**—**Miniature Trumpet**. With a yellow cup (or trumpet) and white petals (corolla), this very sweet, early, short narcissus needs some sun to increase.

■ **'Jenny'**—**Cyclamineus**. Similar to 'Topolino,' this variety blooms a bit later and fades to pure white; it can take some shade.

In general, pure white narcissus, such as 'Thalia,' 'Ice Wings' and 'Shot Silk,' all *Triandus* narcissus, tend not to increase well so should be put in an ideal location with rich soil and full sun.

Narcissus bulbocodium 'Golden Bells' is a new clone of the yellow, hoop-petticoat narcissus that increases well and has thin, narrow green foliage.

Look for these *Narcissus* varieties at the Arboretum Fall Bulb & Plant Sale on Sunday, October 3, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Arboretum Foundation members have an early opportunity to buy bulbs only on Saturday, October 2, from noon to 2:00 p.m.) Planting these robust selections this fall will lead to pools of narcissus in springs to come—much to admire. ☺

BOB LILLY is a former board member of the Arboretum Foundation and co-chair of the Foundation's Fall Bulb & Plant Sale and chair of the spring plant sale, FlorAbundance. He was one of the designers of the perennial border at the Bellevue Botanical Garden, where the display of perennialized narcissus is breathtaking.



Welch Sanctuary: A Shared Haven

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY POLLY HANKIN

Some people have an opportunity, within their lifetimes, to purchase a piece of property for creating a home. The idea of creating a haven of peace, beauty and comfort for family, friends and self is a well established goal within our society. The choice of acreage depends on some very

practical considerations, such as location, proximity to nearby services and community, size and price. Less practical considerations also influence the purchase. Are there potentials for views? Will there be sufficient sun for gardening? Mature trees for privacy and a sense of being in nature? A creek, pond or

Through this moongate, Terry Welch created a rock pool and waterfall as a tribute to the Snoqualmie people and to memorialize the remarkable natural beauty of Snoqualmie Falls.

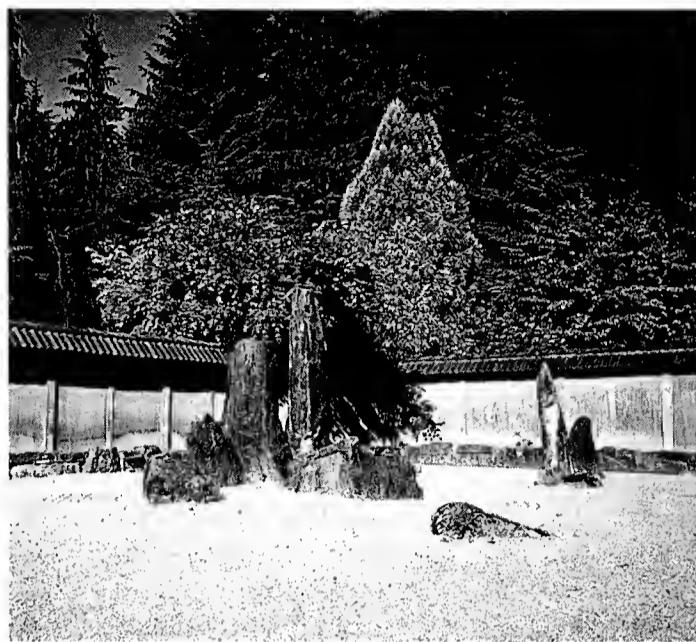
waterfront on a large body of water is part of the dream for many. Whatever our priorities, the quest to find the perfect setting for one's personal haven is just the beginning of a long and exciting journey.

In 1975 Terry Welch engaged in such a search. He was looking for a piece of property with water, sizeable enough to isolate him from future development in the area, but not so far from Seattle and Bellevue that future landscape design clients would hesitate to call. The property would be a setting for home as well as a place to practice 18th century English, naturalistic landscaping fused with Japanese garden aesthetics. Welch was lucky. He found his haven the first day out looking. In fact, it was the only piece of property he looked at!

Shared Habitat

The 24-acre property is defined by two beaver ponds that create a 5-acre wetland on the site, creating a rich habitat for many creatures. Eagles, owls, ospreys and red-tailed hawks all visit regularly to prey on the property's many small mammals, reptiles and fish. This is but a small piece of the Tuck Creek Watershed, a wetland that drains an area of over 300 acres. Many creatures travel through the property, and Welch's land has become a key piece of this important natural resource.

Besides being a rich habitat for Northwest wildlife, the garden is a beautiful landscape that showcases Welch's design skills. Anyone lucky enough to have visited the garden will remember the dramatic Zen Garden and series of water features surrounding the house. The *tsukimi*, or moon-viewing temple, was completed in 1993 at the edge of the pond, and two years later the Welch Sanctuary was



Welch's Zen garden, of raked gravel and stone, is surrounded by a backdrop of Northwest evergreens.

given an award from the National Wildlife Association, recognizing this unique place where animals, plants and people live a harmonious life together. The award was a surprise. Terry had followed his heart in creating this sanctuary.

Connecting with the Spirit of the Snoqualmie

Over the years, beavers have made their presence felt in a multitude of ways.

Welch remembers the morning he awoke to find 19 of 20 *Cryptomeria japonica* taken down. Beavers have also taken out groves of leyland cypress (*X Cupressocyparis leylandii*), specimen Japanese maples, *Thujopsis dolobrata*, rhododendrons and viburnums, as well many other species of tree and shrubs.

The only way to garden with these neighbors is to plan for them. Through trial and error, plantings have been developed that can survive near these very active creatures. Beavers are not very swift or coordinated on land and therefore will not venture more than about fifty feet from the pond edge. Any plantings within this fifty-foot boundary need to be protected with wire mesh, from ground surface up to 2 and 1/2 feet high. Plantings that cannot be protected by wire are moved beyond the beavers' reach as soon as there is any evidence of the hungry creatures' enjoying them. There are even some plants that the animals haven't bothered, including all non-woody plants. Pines have also been left undisturbed.

All of this wildlife activity would probably get most gardeners thinking about live-trapping or even more desperate measures. However, Welch learned that the original people of the area, the Snoqualmie, identified the beaver as their totem, and he decided that his interaction with beavers could be his connection with

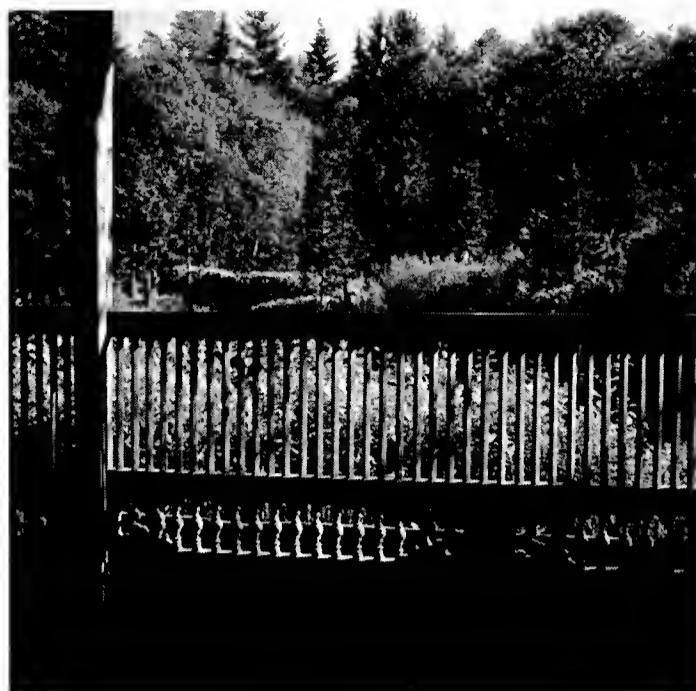
the spirit of the Snoqualmie. These native people saw beaver as having three very important similarities to themselves. First, beaver used water as a means of getting around. They also used wood as a source of food and as a building material. And lastly, both the Snoqualmie and the beaver lived in lodges.

This desire to connect with the spirit of the land and its early inhabitants has led Welch to incorporate Snoqualmie mythology into the landscape story. Two beaver house posts, carved by Duane Pasco, stand on the upper beaver dam as part of a shrine to the beaver. Further from the pond, visitors pass through a moongate and find themselves at a large rock-lined pool located at the bottom of a waterfall memorializing the remarkable Snoqualmie Falls.

As Welch says, "I believe I have learned a lot from this land and the wildlife inhabiting it. I am now more interested in what nature does than what I can do." Welch has been busy learning from nature how to interact with wildlife and says, "Nature has been my best teacher as I work to create beauty by manipulating plants."

Sharing New Sensibilities

This past winter brought a devastating ice storm that snapped the trunks and branches of countless deciduous trees. It was a heart-breaking sight for Welch, but he and his crew spent days cleaning the debris and piling it into long windrows along the pond edge for wildlife habitat. The grove of *Betula jacquemontii*, planted twenty years ago, has a new geyser-like form as a result of the storm. Welch knows that ten years ago he would probably have taken the chainsaw to them instead of adjusting his own sensibilities and



Looking out at the wetland from inside the *tsukimi*, the moon-viewing temple.

leaving them as he has.

On a recent visit with Welch, he described coming home from hikes in the nearby Cascade Mountains and being appalled by his own activities. Why did I clear? Why did I plant katsuras and dawn redwoods? But in fact, many of the introduced species have created habitat, and the property that began as a setting for a landscape garden is now a wildlife sanctuary that will be preserved through a land

trust. It is a small but important link in a series of parcels along Tuck Creek that provide essential elements for the creatures we need to protect.

Welch went looking for property to build a garden that fused English naturalistic landscape design with the Japanese aesthetic and found the spirit of the 'Children of the Moon,' as the Snoqualmie are called. This understanding is passed on to local middle school children through a program with the Woodinville Garden Club and Woodinville School District. Students visit the garden, hear the myths of the Snoqualmie people, and learn how the needs of animals, people and plants are balanced.

Terry Welch's success in meeting his own needs as well as taking care of a valuable habitat may be a lesson for us all. As we pursue the goal of creating our own haven, we must learn how the land provides for those creatures living there before us. Without their presence and the effort to balance the needs of all, we may destroy the very haven we seek. ☺

POLLY HANKIN is a landscape architect and teaches full-time in Edmonds Community College's Horticulture Department. She is a member of the Bulletin's editorial board.



Beware the Viburnum Leaf Beetle

BY RICHIE STEFFEN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD MURRAY

A destructive little beetle has arrived in the Pacific Northwest and is chewing its way toward the Puget Sound region. This new pest is the viburnum leaf beetle (*Pyrrhalta viburni*). The larvae of this insect can reduce susceptible viburnum species to bare twigs by late spring. Native to Europe, it was discovered in North America in 1947, but for unknown reasons the population exploded in the late 1970s. It has now

become well established in Eastern Canada and the Eastern and Midwestern United States. About three years ago this voracious insect was discovered in Vancouver, B.C., and has now spread to Bellingham, Washington, and surrounding Whatcom County.

In mid-June 2004, when Carolyn Jones, Director of the Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden, and I were visiting VanDusen Botanical Garden, we were surprised at the amount of

BACKGROUND: This defoliated snowball viburnum was decimated by the larvae of viburnum leaf beetle.
ABOVE INSET: Adult viburnum leaf beetles, although small, are also capable of defoliating a shrub completely; so even if plants recover after an attack by beetle larvae, they may be defoliated once again.



Roundish rows of eggs deposited on the undersides of branch ends



A close-up of the damage done by the larvae of viburnum leaf beetle and the culprits themselves.

damage to the viburnum collection and made notes on feeding preferences.

Although we saw damage on almost all species, several popular species showed a high degree of resistance. In addition, shrubs in heavy shade or under stress showed more damage than the same species growing in better conditions. Susceptible species under stress or in the shade were killed from repeated defoliation, a toll that must have taken several years to accomplish. It seemed to us that the level of damage shown on susceptible and moderately susceptible species would be unacceptable to gardeners, making this pest likely to remove many useful and aesthetically pleasing landscape plants from the Pacific Northwest plant palette.

The Pest

Viburnum leaf beetle hatches in spring, most often in late April or early May, and begins to feed on the undersides of leaves. The newly emerged larvae are about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch long; they feed until June and grow to about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in length. The larvae resemble maggots and are pale greenish-yellow with dark brownish-black spots; they become darker in color with each molt. Their feeding causes skeletonizing of the leaves, and in heavy infestations, complete defoliation.

After their spring feast, the larvae crawl

down shrubs' stems to the soil and pupate into their adult phase: a small, relatively nondescript beetle. It is only about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long and mottled dark and light brown in color. It is generally thought to take eight to 10 weeks from hatching to the adult phase. Adult beetles feed from midsummer until the first killing frost. Female beetles lay eggs from midsummer until frost. The female deposits her eggs in noticeable rows on the underside of the ends of branches, typically on the current season's wood. These deposits of eggs are of round-ish shape and slightly raised above the bark.

Management

Although this pest is currently rare in most of Washington and Oregon, it is likely to be present but unnoticed (at least initially) in the Seattle and Portland areas. Look for egg cases this winter on landscape plantings. The egg cases should be pruned out and destroyed. Our contacts in British Columbia tell us that no strong control measures are presently in place there. Little is known about the pest in Washington state either, so care should be exercised when bringing viburnums in from out-of-area. If you think you have viburnum leaf beetle, contact your local cooperative extension service agent. Horticulture professionals working with the public can limit the

spread of this pest and keep it out of the area for the time being.

For more information, with images and suggested control measures, visit Cornell University's excellent Web site: Viburnum Leaf Beetle Citizen Science at <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/vlb/>.

Susceptible Species

Viburnum dentatum

V. opulus (*V. opulus* 'Nanum' 75% to 100% defoliated at VanDusen)

V. opulus var. *americana* (*triloba*) (75% defoliation at VanDusen)

V. propinquum (90% defoliation at VanDusen)

V. rafinesquianum

V. sargentii

Moderately Susceptible Species

Viburnum acerifolium

V. cassinoides (30% to 50% defoliation at VanDusen)

V. x carlcephalum (10% defoliation at VanDusen)

V. dilatatum

V. lantana (50% defoliation at VanDusen)

V. lentago

V. macrocephalum

V. x pragense

V. prunifolium

V. tinus (10% defoliation at VanDusen)

V. wrightii

Resistant¹ Species

Viburnum x bodnantense (very minor to no damage at VanDusen)

V. x burkwoodii

V. carlesii (5% damage at VanDusen)

V. davidii (10% to 20% damage in heavy shade, minor damage in open areas at VanDusen)

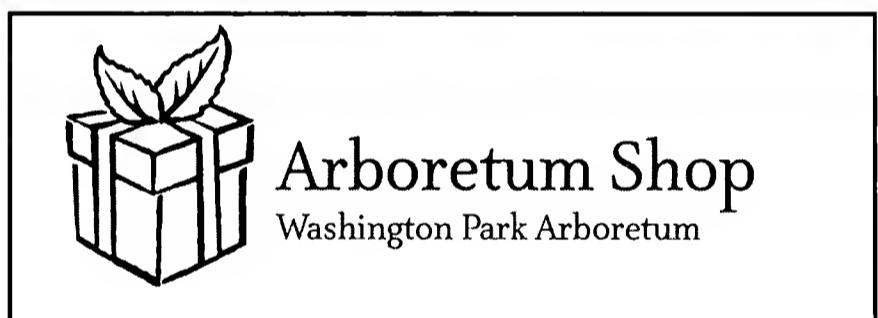
V. x juddii

V. lantanoides (syn. *V. alnifolium*)

V. plicatum f. *tomentosum* (minor damage in shade at VanDusen)
V. x rhytidophylloides
V. rhytidophyllum
V. setigerum
V. sieboldii

¹Feeding on resistant species may be appreciable when beetles are at peak densities, but these plants generally survive quite well in the long run. ☺

RICHIE STEFFEN is Coordinator of Horticulture for the Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden in Seattle.



Fall & Holiday Shopping

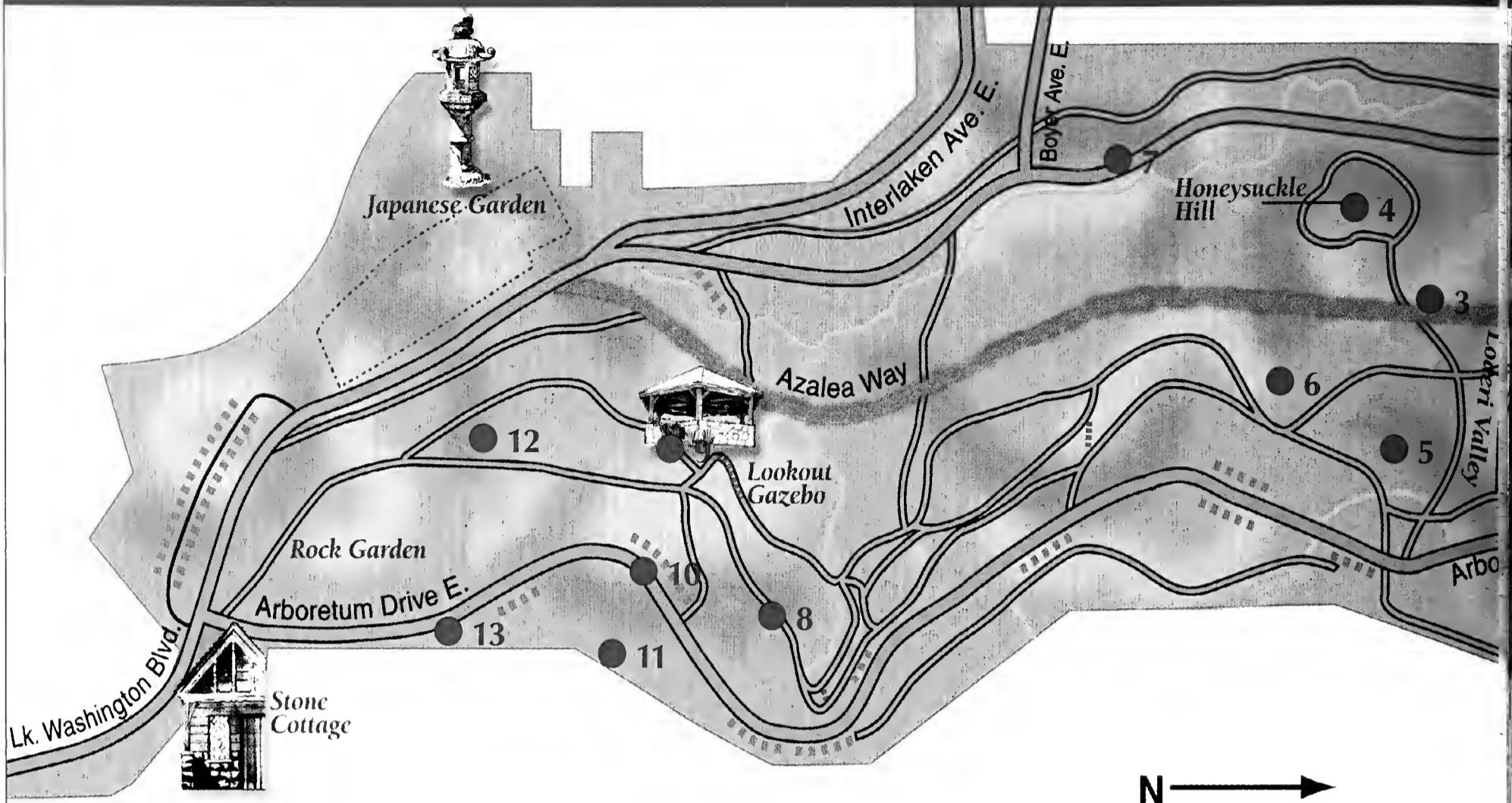
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AN ARBORETUM



FAVORITES OF TWO INVETERATE HORTICULTURE STAFF MEMBERS

BY LOU STUBECKI & DAVID ZUCKERMAN

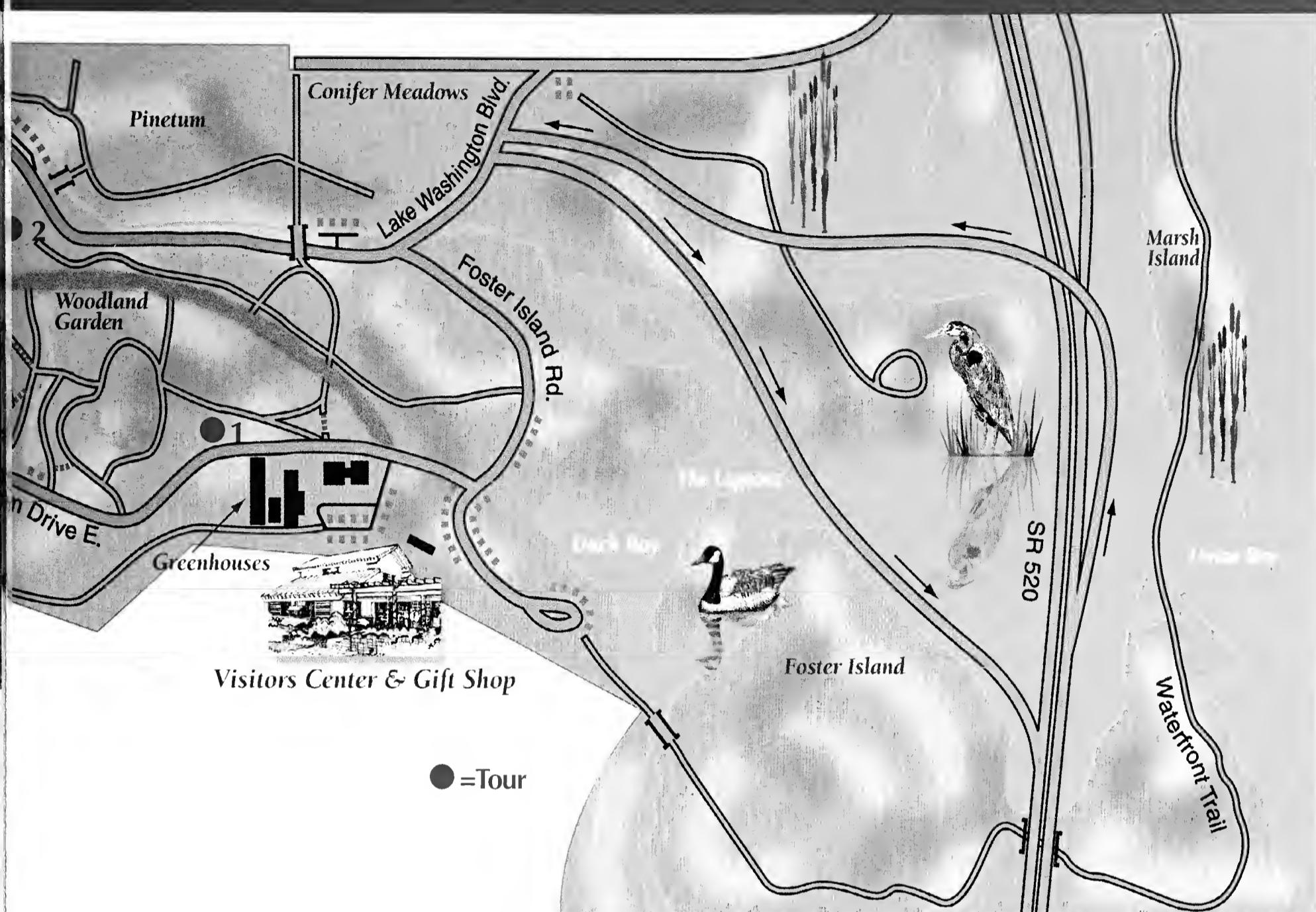
Rather than send you to the Woodland Garden for easy fall color, we decided to provide a different, and, we hope, even more brilliant and satisfying perspective for all you leaf-

peepers. Here's a baker's dozen plants, traveling from north to south, for an autumn color tour. So, without further ado, lace up your sneakers and take this copy of the Bulletin with you for a stroll. Let's get started!



ALL COLOR TOUR

MAP ARTWORK BY LEE WOLFE



LEFT: Black gum or tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) leaves seem to come in almost every shade of red and gold. This tall, handsome tree, native to the Eastern United States and Canada, has charcoal black bark to complement its dramatic fall color.

BELLOW: Native to the central and Southeastern United States, *Oxydendrum arboreum* begins to color early in autumn. Its shiny red leaves make its fruit clusters stand out like tiny jewels.





Native from Quebec to Minnesota and then south to Georgia and Texas, the adaptable shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*) is appreciated for its nuts and its memorable bark as well as its jaw-dropping, brilliant fall foliage, which has captured the hearts of many Arboretum visitors.

1 *Oxydendrum arboreum*, sourwood, on the west side of Arboretum Drive East, across from Plant Donations. Here's a group of three sourwoods, one of which typically turns an unusual, eye-catching, translucent crimson-pink.

2 *Acer rubrum* cultivars, red maple, between Azalea Way and Lake Washington Boulevard East, west of the lower woodland pond. *Acer rubrum* 'October Glory,' *A. rubrum* 'Columnare' and *A. rubrum* 'Schlesingeri' are a few of the cultivars you will find here, exhibiting outstanding red fall color. *Acer rubrum* 'Columnare' has a handsome, upright, narrow form as well.

3 *Carya ovata*, shagbark hickory, on the west side of Azalea Way between Loderi Valley and the Woodland Garden in the nut tree collection. This particular tree has the most intense yellow fall color. It would be worthy of propagating, naming and introducing into the nursery trade.

4 *Nyssa sylvatica*, black gum or tupelo, where the Loderi Valley trail ends at the base of Honeysuckle Hill, just west of Azalea Way. A mélange of reds, oranges and yellows, but mostly reds, greets the visitor abruptly.

5 *Magnolia* spp., just south of the heart of the Loderi Valley trail. Best appreciated

when you look at the fallen leaves on the ground, a textural pleasure of brown and white catches the eye. The top sides of the leaves turns a rich brown, while the undersides are notably white. The two *Magnolia* species responsible for this are *M. officinalis* and *M. hypoleuca*. Another standout for beautiful brown leaves is *M. fraseri*. (See the beautiful photo on page 2!)

6 Asiatic maple collection. Overall, this is a great area for fall color. The standouts are *Acer griseum*, *A. triflorum* and *A. mandshuricum*. It will be difficult to leave this dazzling spectacle, but over half our tour remains, so carry on.

7 *Aesculus flava*, yellow buckeye. On the east side of Lake Washington Boulevard East, just north of Boyer Avenue East, there are two trees that have beautiful red color, sometimes with yellow leaf margins. There are also a few others just south of Plant Donations.

8 *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, dawn redwood, in Rhododendron Glen. The "King of the Glen!" Four statuesque, deciduous conifers with excellent orange-brown to red-brown needles will not disappoint the leaf-peeper, a "must-see" experience in the Glen.

9 *Amelanchier* Hillside, serviceberries, on the south slope of Lookout Pond along Azalea Way. Seven serviceberry taxa combine to provide the broadest spectrum of dazzling colors from yellow to apricot-orange to deep rust reds. But be forewarned, this show is fleeting, as the leaves drop early in fall.

10 *Stewartia monadelpha*, orange-bark or tall stewartia, at lookout parking lot. Our three largest stewartias never fail to stop visitors in their tracks as they drive by the lookout parking lot. Outstanding deep reddish, almost maroon fall color.

11 *Orixa japonica*, located in the Rutaceae collection, on the east side of Arboretum Drive East, behind the Chilean fire trees. A rare, deciduous, aromatic Asian shrub in the citrus family, it is noteworthy here because it turns an unusual pale yellow, almost white, in fall.

12 *Euonymus* Collection, spindletrees, south of the Lookout Gazebo on the upper trail. The collection contains several taxa, most of which color from yellow to reddish-purple. The garish orange and pink fruit capsules that persist into November are a bonus highlight.

13 *Disanthus cercidifolius*, in the Hamamelis family collection, south of the holly parking lot. This rare witchhazel relative is one of our most beautiful deciduous shrubs for fall color, with redbud-like leaves turning brilliant crimson and claret. While in the area, please look for other Hamamelidaceae (say that 10 times!) subjects for outstanding fall color.

That's it—you've seen our favorites, and, in the process, perhaps you've discovered a few of your own. Next year, invite a friend to join you on your own Arboretum fall color tour. ~

Lou STUBECKI has served as Washington Park Arboretum Arborist since 1991.

DAVID ZUCKERMAN has worked in the Arboretum since 1981; currently, he serves as Horticulture Staff Supervisor.

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LEFT: Jennifer Weinberg of Seattle won the professional division grand prize for her composition "Chinese Red Birch."

RIGHT: Paul Metcalf of Seattle won best in the amateur "Landscape" category for "Toward Pinetum."



RIGHT: "Autumn Leaves," photographed by Catherine Reilly of Kenmore, won first prize in the professional "Seasons" category.



A PHOTOGRAPHER'S PARADISE

Winning Photographs in the Arboretum Photo Contest

By LEE C. NEFF

*B*etween the summer of 2003 and June 1, 2004, you may have noticed increasing numbers of cameras and tripods as you explored Washington Park

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Arboretum paths. No wonder, for ultimately 227 photographers entered the Arboretum's photo contest, and they submitted more than 1,000 photographs. Photos were submitted by both amateur and professional photographers in five categories: Plant Portraits, Landscapes, Seasons, Life in the Arboretum and Japanese Garden. The photographs submitted captured life in almost every corner of the Arboretum's 230 acres and were judged by Joy Spurr, David McDonald and Andrew Drake, all professional garden photographers.

When the judges finished their work, \$500 grand prizes went to professional Jennifer Weinberg of Seattle for the landscape "Chinese Red Birch" and to amateur Debra Feinman of North Bend for the plant portrait "Magnolia Pinkie." These and other winning photographs were printed in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer on June 24, 2004.

In addition to the grand prize-winners, prizes were awarded in all other categories.

Professional winners

- CATHERINE REILLY, Kenmore: "Autumn Leaves" (Seasons)
- WILLIAM SUTTON, Seattle: "Wasp Nest" (Life in the Arboretum)
- KATHRYN KEVE, Suquamish: "Wisteria" (Japanese Garden)
- LINDA C. HATCHER, Auburn: "White Camellia" (Plant Portrait)

Amateur winners

- TOM DARK, Peshastin: "Scenic Pathway" (Japanese Garden)

- LINDA K. SCHWARZ, Mountlake Terrace: "Autumn/Magnolia Leaves" (Seasons)
- KEVIN EBI, Seattle: "Baby Mallard Ducks" (Life in the Arboretum)
- PAUL METCALF, Seattle: "Toward Pinetum" (Landscape)

Honorable mention

- RONALD L. BLACK of Snohomish for "Jupiter's Red Spot Look-alike."

All winning photographs will be published in the Bulletin in the season in which they were taken. In this issue are the five photographs depicting fall scenes: "Scenic Pathway" on the cover; "Autumn/Magnolia Leaves" on page 2; and with this overview,

"Autumn Leaves," "Chinese Red Birch" and "Toward Pinetum." Look for additional winning photographs in the winter, spring and summer 2005 issues.

The Arboretum photo contest was an enormous success. Warmest thanks go to contest sponsors, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Ballard Camera and Dietz-Hartlage Landscape Architecture. In addition, special thanks go to those who did the work: Bryan Taulbee of the Arboretum Foundation and other Arboretum staff and volunteers, Pam Perry of Parsons Public Relations and Constance Bollen of CB Graphics. ~

LEE NEFF edits this Bulletin. Occasionally, she shares stories about her garden in regional horticultural publications.



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PRUNING THE PINES: A Familiar Fall Ritual in the Japanese Garden

BY BARBARA ENGRAM

*F*all is always glorious in the Japanese Garden at Washington Park Arboretum. Maples blaze with color; ginkgo trees turn golden and drop their leaves overnight. Winter waits in the wings. The garden has become a hushed place of deep green and silvery needles and bare branches traced against the sky. Though the garden is still open to visitors, the pace has slowed, and fewer guests arrive during these often gray and misty days. Quiet settles on the garden.

And then, one Monday morning some time toward mid-November, the garden comes alive. The pruning team arrives to give the pine trees their annual grooming. This group of profes-

sional consultants, staff and volunteers will carefully shape the garden's many pine trees. Starting at the north end of the garden, they work their way toward the main entrance. Working singly or, more often, in groups, they clean and shape each tree. It takes about a week, from Monday morning through mid-afternoon Saturday, to complete the task of pruning every pine in the garden.

Apprentice to Professional

Masa Mizuno leads the team. Mizuno has been a part of the pine-pruning process here since the early 1980s, when Dick Yamasaki hired him to join his pruning team. Yamasaki has been associated with the garden since it



LEFT: "One Monday morning some time toward mid-November, the garden comes alive." Ladders set up for pine-pruning in the Japanese Garden seem to be quizzically curious about the work to come.

ABOVE: The pine-pruning tradition continues, even on the rainiest November day.

was installed in the early 1960s. He was in charge of setting the stones in the garden and continued as a consultant until the early 1990s, when he retired. He still shows up some time during the week to visit with the team. When he retired in the early '90s, he recommended that Mizuno carry on as head of the team.

Masa Mizuno's training began in high school, in Japan, where he took a landscape architecture course of study. Interestingly enough, he says courses there focused on Western gardens more than on the gardens of Japan. After graduation he worked in the Japanese landscape industry, where he began to learn pruning from senior gardeners on the

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job. In Japan, a student is not allowed to touch a pine tree until the third year of his apprenticeship; for the first two years, he just watches. In 1977, he came to the United States to work in the Japanese garden at Portland, Oregon, where he remained for four years. Since then he has run his own landscape design/build and maintenance business.

Purposeful Pruning

When Mizuno first began working in Seattle's Japanese garden, pines were pruned twice a year, in spring and again in fall. In spring, pines are "candled:" the tender new growth is pinched back, restricting and concentrating new growth, so that by fall, trees are dense with needles. Fall pruning then selectively thins needles and shapes trees. This pruning regime helps to restrict the growth of the pine so its size can be in proportion to its site.

If a pine gets too large for its location, it is already too late to correct the situation; trees must be shaped well when they are young. The initial forming of the tree should be done before it reaches 10 years of age, or even earlier. Although now we can buy pines whose training already has been started, such trees were not readily available when the garden was installed in 1960. From notes left by Juki Iida, one of seven men who developed the plan for the garden and the person in charge of its installation, Japanese Garden Head Gardener Jim Thomas says it appears that untrained trees were used. Iida's installation instructions directed workers to plant the trees at angles (rather than upright), as their trunks were so straight.

Symbols of Long Life

But why pines? Why all this attention to just one kind of tree? According to Jim Thomas, they are the most important plant in the garden. Masa Mizuno points out that they are the most dominant native plant in Japan. "They grow everywhere," he says. "The offshore

islands are covered with pines." They are evergreen, everlasting and so symbolize long life. And different species of pines have different meanings. The Japanese red pine (*Pinus densiflora*) is considered a female plant; the black pine (*Pinus thunbergii*) symbolizes male energy. They are often planted near each other, sometimes leaning toward each other; in this configuration, they represent lovers "pining" for each other. (As in English, the Japanese words for "waiting" and "pine tree" sound alike.) The garden also has a number of our native shore pines (*Pinus contorta*) that are pruned in traditional shapes. The pines are either formal and upright or pruned in informal shapes reminiscent of trees that have grown in the harsh, windblown climate of mountains and shore.

Experienced Team Members

Mark Akai, a professional pruner in the Seattle area, joins the team each year. Akai, whose father was a U.S. Army linguist, grew up in the United States and Japan. He recalls going to gardens in Japan as a child with his mother. He, too, first worked in the Japanese garden as a member of Dick Yamasaki's team. Having worked for Yamasaki as a teenager, he then started his own business doing landscape installation and maintenance. He met Masa Mizuno in 1988 and has been a member of the fall pruning team ever since. When the pine-pruning budget was cut in 1989, reducing the schedule to a once-yearly pruning, Akai worked all winter grooming the pines, along with then-new Head Gardener Jim Thomas. Thomas credits Akai with teaching him to prune pines.

Stuart Burns, a colleague of Masa Mizuno from Portland, Oregon, also joins the team each year. He first met Mizuno in 1981 at Portland's Japanese garden, when he began work there a month before Mizuno's tenure ended. He was trained by Mizuno and the two garden directors who followed him. Although trained by traditional Japanese

gardeners, Burns didn't have the luxury of years of just watching; starting with Mizuno, his teachers used the "hands on" approach. He did have the advantage of learning from people who followed very different schools of thought about training pines.

The last regular team member is Bob Fahlman of Edmonton, Alberta. Formerly a pharmacist who now owns his own landscape business, Fahlman met Masa Mizuno when he conducted a workshop in pruning at Devon Botanical Garden near Edmonton. Fahlman asked Mizuno if he could join him and since 1998 has come to Seattle every fall for the pine-pruning.

Masa Mizuno, Mark Akai, Stuart Burns and Bob Fahlman, along with Jim Thomas, form the basic pine-pruning team. On a first-name basis with all who assist, they are joined throughout the week by volunteers and other Seattle Parks and Recreation employees who contribute as they are able. On any given day, you will find them working singly or in groups, obviously having a good time. They set up scaffolding to reach trees leaning over the pond, set up, prune, clean up or move ladders. With seemingly no direction, they move purposefully from one tree to another, sometimes silent, sometimes laughing and chatting. In the manner of experts, they make it all look so easy.

Pruning Pines

Pruning pine trees is different from pruning any other plant. Masa Mizuno points out that although most trees are pruned by the branch, pines are pruned by needle cluster. It is an



Bob Fahlman concentrates on carefully pruning a pine needle cluster.

intense process; the pruner has to inspect each cluster to determine how to proceed. Mark Akai shares this viewpoint, adding, "You have to concentrate a lot more. Because you are pruning for shape, you have to think about the next year's growth." At the same time, he finds that pruning is very relaxing. It's easy to lose track of time.

Stuart Burns sees an "almost Zen-like quality in the way you have to let yourself go." And

how do you know where to cut? Given several shoots, which do you choose? One general rule is that upper parts of the tree are pruned thinner than lower parts, to allow light to reach lower branches. To slow the growth and spread of a tree, to keep it in proportion to its space, the pruner removes the strongest, often the central, shoot. In our damp climate, where rusts, mildews and fungi thrive, it is important to a tree's health to prune so that each needle cluster has space and air circulation. As in all types of pruning, dead or damaged branches are removed. After that, it is a matter of artistry. Each tree is different; each has its own beauty, which pruning reveals and enhances.

This one week in fall has become important to members of the team and the employees and volunteers who work with them. For Jim Thomas, it's a week working with more than one other employee in the garden, a time "to have peers working with me who are professionals, who focus on this 3 and 1/2-acre garden as if this is the most important place in the universe. That focus, that quality of work and camaraderie is special."

continues on page 29

The Spirit of Place

BY LESLIE NORTON

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOY SPURR

The pool in my garden makes me think of Jens Jensen, the Danish garden designer who worked in the Chicago area in the early 1900s. Jensen loved the prairie landscape and felt that the introduction of exotic plants would destroy what he called its unique feeling or "the spirit of the prairie."

This garden pool seems to me to evoke the "spirit of Western Washington," for the Western Washington environment has spoken for itself and has selected the plants—mainly lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*), sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*), piggy-back plant (*Tolmiea menziesii*) and, from the many local mosses, those best suited to the cold, moist pool rim and wall. In this way Western Washington's climate and native plants seem to have created here a definite "spirit of place." There is an ineffable unity here.

Moreover, it is not just the plants that say "Western Washington." The local animal life plays a part here, too. The dark, shaded water is the home of small black salamanders. The slender stream of water from the hill spring attracts birds who come for a shower or bath. One year, a visiting pair of incredibly colorful orioles splashed about



This small pool in Leslie Norton's garden is situated below a steep hillside, fed by a natural spring and surrounded by native plants.

in the stream. I saw them only once, but their colors were so spectacular I never forgot them.

The pool occasionally has a night visitor—an opossum? A raccoon? A coyote? I think some animal comes to fish for salamanders and in doing so makes rather a mess of things. However, in a few days the plants have re-established themselves. One never knows what to expect here, and it is always worth a visit to see what is going on.

Of course, it requires a very long period of time for a large area, such as a prairie, a desert or a mountain meadow of spring flowers to evolve its own "spirit of place." In my garden, it has been 27 years since the raw concrete tile was put in place and the pool's own spirit began to evolve. Here, the sound of running water from the hill spring adds the final nuance to "Western Washington."

I think Jens Jensen would understand. ♦

LESLIE NORTON, a long-time member of Arboretum Foundation Unit 5, enjoys the spirit and wildlife of her unique place in Bothell, Washington.



Farewell to the Director: A Decade Remembered

BY JOAN HOCKADAY

Sepping aside as Washington Park Arboretum Director, John Wott is continuing a life of high-stepping, begun years ago for the marching band of the Clyde, Ohio, "Flyers." As an accomplished clarinet player, he rarely bugled Arboretum meetings to order, but he does regret spending so many of his director days in "meetings... and meetings."

The people, plants and politics of the past 11 years come in for final review during a recent interview.

The Arboretum's Lifeblood

He'll miss the volunteers most. "Our volunteers are our lifeblood. Actually, they're on the public line, they're out there, like even the gardeners...; they are the ones people talk to, ask questions [of] and tell stories to," Wott says. Volunteers tell "friends and neighbors" about the Arboretum and then "every once in a while one of them will leave you money!" Some of his favorite volunteers over the years were "just a delight" he remembers wistfully.

Family photographs reveal early interests in John Wott's life:
raising chickens (a white bantam)
and play the clarinet in his Clyde, Ohio, school marching band.

With volunteers disappearing into the workforce these past two decades, affecting museums and zoos and non-profit organizations across the state, a significant change in Arboretum management is evident to Wott, starting with the ever-popular Arboretum Foundation spring plant sale, FlorAbundance.

As unofficial and jovial keeper of the long, snaking, check-out line at plant sales years ago, Wott remembers, first, the indelible sound of boxes shuffling along the ground as gardeners inched their purchases closer to the head of the line. But mostly he remembers the enthusiasm of volunteers, who raised the seedlings, gathered the plants and practically put on the annual show.

Today the sale is even bigger—at Sand Point rather than in cramped Arboretum quarters—but now amateur and professional vendors do most of the growing and gathering for the big day.

Educating Children

Educating Seattle's adult gardeners—a staple in the “old days”—has also fundamentally changed during Wott's tenure. “When we started the Center [for Urban Horticulture] 20 years ago, there were essentially very, very few adult public classes being taught anywhere. What has happened now, you pick up the Sunday paper and every nursery, every community, every club, everybody is having a garden tour, everyone's teaching a class on pruning. The competition is immense. People can pick and choose.”

The Arboretum education success story has shifted to children's education, and Wott is as proud of this accomplishment as any: “We have a great school program. We built that program close to the school curriculum—we get good reports!” Explorer packs and summer day camps build on the children's education program successes, with more innovations to come. “You have to be visionary.”

Seattle Favorites

Asked if he has a favorite part of the Arboretum, he singles out a high point on Azalea Way, overlooking a particularly fine oak tree—the golden-leaf oak (*Quercus robur* ‘Concordia’)—and then also remarks that “the Franklinia tree [*Franklinia alatamaha*] is as pretty as anything.”

With the entire 230 acres at his doorstep each lunch time, he says he hesitates to stroll through the gardens then. Speaking as a true gardener (or the Midwest farm boy that he was), he comments, “I don't like to walk there because then I see problems. I see weeds to pull or something else I'd like to make better, but I can't do it then, so I go someplace else, most likely Green Lake.”

Asked his favorite season in Seattle, Wott is quick to reply, “Fall—I like the clear warm days and the cool nights.”

“A Terrific Collection”

Following (loosely, years later) in the footsteps and imprint of talented plantsman and early Director Brian Mulligan, Wott inherited few of the initial design or planting problems associated with newer city parks. The Arboretum “has a terrific collection of plants. Brian was exceedingly knowledgeable and resourceful in finding stuff from around the world.”

Instead, Wott came when trees and shrubs were beginning to show their age, 40 years on, in some cases. By then casual users and neighbors were quite content enjoying old woods and dog-walking paths (man-made or overgrown) next door.

Admission is still free to all, and no fences are allowed at one of the largest and oldest arboreta on the West Coast, Wott muses. The Japanese Garden long ago began charging admission, and if the city would allow each passing motorist (20,000 a day, some days, he says) on Lake Washington Boulevard a \$1 toll—“just a dollar!”—the

need for an Arboretum budget would "disappear in a year," Dr. Wott jokingly suggests.

Planning for the Future

Wott weathered many storms and enjoyed successes and will retreat now to his beloved teaching at the Center for Urban Horticulture and to his hilltop city garden, scene of so many Christmas gatherings for Arboretum supporters.

His master's degree class in public presentation is legendary. Bulletin editorial board member Marty Wingate remembers it well, and City People's Steve Magley "hated" the idea of speaking in public but came through with flying colors, Wott remembers. "It was the best course you ever made me take," the storeowner told Wott after public speaking engagements mounted.

The Washington Park Arboretum political set-up—with three administrative entities involved with policy—might have put a farm boy like John Wott out to pasture sooner than his allotted years. The University of Washington, Seattle Parks and Recreation and the Arboretum Foundation all contribute support and opinions toward keeping the Arboretum in shape. These three groups jointly carry on the overall Olmsted design legacy of the '30s and '40s and recently prepared a long-range plan—"the first-ever complete vision!" Wott exclaims.

With a major master plan adopted (and



Wott, wearing one of his considerable collection of Christmas ties

its many public hearings in the past), and its implementation phase beginning, Wott recalls "getting a lump in my stomach," when facing opposition to modernization suggestions put forward by garden planners. Proposals were then reduced, and peace restored.

Eying the final version of the 21st century Arboretum plan, and seizing the moment to step aside in the interlude between planning and finishing touches, Dr. Wott offers this advice to his successor:

"We have a game plan . . . now we need someone who can lead that vision and excite and continue to bring together the three major entities that love and support this institution—and then work with all the partners

to excite and educate the community to really want to support this place."

Time, now, for Wott to sit in his own city garden, enjoy the view (no weeds allowed), and prepare class courses designed to terrify the next generation of horticultural public presentation graduates. This, above all, pleases John Wott, as he exits center stage from Washington Park Arboretum. ♦

JOAN HOCKADAY is on the Bulletin's editorial board and is editing a book on the history of Seattle's Olmsted parks and gardens for the University of Washington Press.

The Field Trip of a Lifetime!

BY JOHN A. WOTT

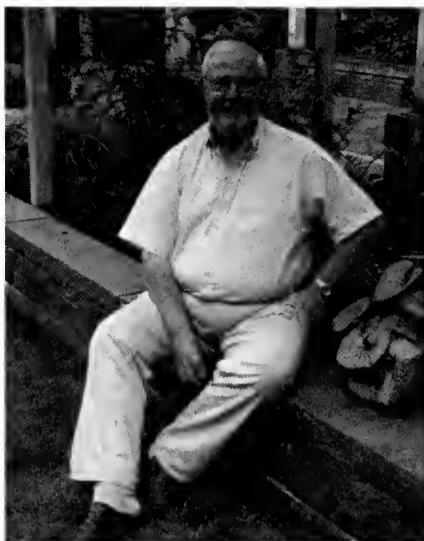
I arrived in Seattle on April 23, 1981 with my blue Buick and U-Haul. I turned off the Evergreen Point Bridge onto Lake Washington Boulevard and drove into the Arboretum. Little did I know what challenges and fun lay ahead. I was recruited to Seattle to help start the Center for Urban Horticulture, including working in the Washington Park Arboretum. What a trip it has been! Few individuals ever have the opportunities I have been given.

My first public speech was in May 1981 at an Arboretum Foundation dinner at a restaurant on Westlake overlooking the sun, water and boats. I was supposed to tell them about the future ahead of us. Now, I wonder what I really said.

Becoming Director

Eleven years ago, when first asked to become the on-site Arboretum Director, I was not sure I should accept. But I will never forget the welcome of Mary Thorne, Duane Kelly, and Sheila Taft, who worked with me to chart the Arboretum's future. (I still have the vase that held Duane's and Sheila's welcome bouquet.) That future could hardly have unfolded without the support of Dean David Thorud, Dean Bruce Bare, and Center for Urban Horticulture Directors Clement Hamilton and Thomas Hinckley; Neal Lessenger, when he was in the University of Washington real estate office, and now Sandra Lier in the Vice President's Office. My co- "Arphort" Deborah Andrews, Arboretum Foundation Executive Director, has been a constant friend and confidant.

I still have the card, fireman's hat, and whistle which Lee Clarke and Nuki Fellows



A visit with John Wott

sent to help me try to "tame the Arboretum zoo!" Believe me, I have even used that whistle a couple of times.

Washington Park Arboretum is far different from the way it was 11 years ago.

- The large trees have grown tremendously—after all this is the Northwest.

- The number of people coming to the Arboretum for enjoyment every year has at least doubled.

- The number of school children involved in Arboretum educational programs has grown to nearly 5,000 a year.

- The administrations of the University of Washington (College of Forest Resources), City of Seattle Parks and Recreation, and the Arboretum Foundation have come a million miles in understanding each other and in working together for the betterment of the Arboretum.

The appreciation of the Arboretum, and of what it really is, has grown throughout the community and the region. We are now recognized as a State Arboretum of the State of Washington. The community understands us better as a community resource for all ages—a place for respite and relaxation, a holder of one of the world's most important collections of woody temperate plants, and as a place to learn about ecology, nature, conservation, and plants.

We have a master plan for the future, the first complete plan ever in the Arboretum's 75-year history. The most joyful days: the days in 2001 when both the City Council and University of Washington Board of Regents unanimously passed the master plan, after seven years of hard work!

BRENDA CHRYSTIE

Partialities

I have met some of the finest people in the world through my work at the Arboretum. Many of them still remain my friends. Everyone I have ever met has always loved the Arboretum, even if the reasons for our love have been in a different order. We have had and continue to have the best and most dedicated staff of any public garden.

Some of my favorite spots:

- The lower portion of the Woodland Garden with its colorful maples in the fall.
- The large pond and surrounding bowl on south Azalea Way.
- The unending, changing cycle of spring color.
- The New Zealand garden, since it was the first big project I supervised, and to me, signals the beginning of the future toward which we now are moving.
- Standing at the lookout and scanning the horizon—the view is stupendous and, to me, signifies the encompassing beauty of the world the Arboretum offers us.

Two of my least favorite things:

- When people pass my open office door without saying “Hello.”
- Time moving too fast.

Most of all, I love to read the children’s thank-you notes: “I have now become an arboretumist.” “My first field trip was to the Arboretum and it was FUN!”

When I became the Arboretum Director, someone remarked they were glad I was a spiritual person. The spirits I have called upon to provide me guidance and strength have helped me do as much as I could. I am grateful, for I, too, have had the field trip of a lifetime and it was FUN. ☺

When he leaves his Arboretum position, **JOHN WOTT** will continue full time as professor of urban horticulture, teaching, doing research and advising graduate students.

A FAMILIAR FALL RITUAL IN THE JAPANESE GARDEN

continued from page 23

Stuart Burns also mentions the camaraderie and adds that he often works for people who don’t fully understand what he is doing. Here though he finds “a group that understands, shares values, appreciates what’s going on.” Mark Akai says, “We don’t see each other all year. It’s nice to see each other again, catch up, see the different views of gardening or pruning they’ve seen or come up with.” For him, it’s a “wonderful environment of true craftsmen who are good at what they do.”

What keeps Bob Fahlman flying down from Edmonton each year? “The ambience... everyone in it together, enjoying it. People enjoying each other. This is a very inclusive group, no one is on the outside.” And team leader Masa Mizuno sums it up: “All of us have private businesses, mostly in residential settings where there is concern with the amount of time allowed to do a job, or it becomes prohibitively expensive. We have limited opportunities to prune thoroughly. Here we get to do it right. We can learn. We meet with the younger generation who sincerely receive training from us through volunteering and assisting.

Those of us who work in the Japanese Garden are a part of that tradition of teaching, caring for the garden, passing on skills and welcoming newcomers that extends from the very beginning of the garden to this day and into the future. This unbroken thread is woven into the life of the garden and helps to make it the very special place it is. ☺

BARBARA ENGRAM is a landscape designer, consultant and professional pruner, specializing in Japanese-style gardens. She has been a volunteer at the Japanese Garden for over 10 years.

REFERENCE AND INSPIRATION:

Enough to Keep You In Books All Winter!

BY BRIAN THOMPSON

What a bountiful harvest of new books the past year has produced for Pacific Northwest gardeners. Written by their fellows from throughout the region, there's so, so much to read. Let's take a deep breath and plunge right in.

No Frills

John P. Van Miert has long contributed to the "Weeder's Digest," the newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Whatcom County. Now, with the help of Cheryll Greenwood Kinsley,

he has compiled and updated that material into "Garden Sense: A Book of Common Wisdom," highlighting from month-to-month the basic chores, special plants of the season and other nuggets of wisdom based on nearly 80 (yes, 80!) years of gardening, over 40 of those years in Bellingham.

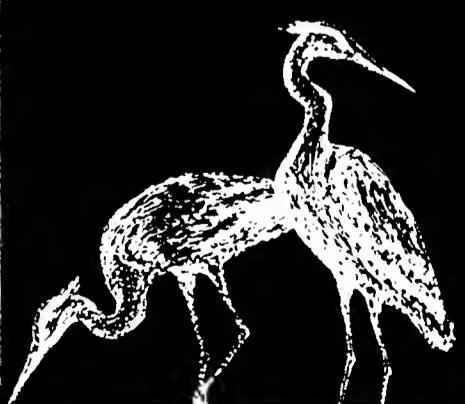
There are no photos or other fancy trimmings in this self-published book; just good, helpful advice and solid information that we can all find useful, no matter how many years we have under our green thumbs.



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Just north of Bellingham, on the B.C. side of the border, comes a plethora of advice and ideas from over 40 experts in "A Place in the Rain: Designing the West Coast Garden." Editor Michael Lascelle tightly combines the advice of landscape designers and architects, contractors and horticulturists in planning the layout, hardscaping, plant selection and special features for a Northwest garden that will be a pleasure for both the near- and long-term.

Like the previous publication, this is not a fancy production, but self-inspired gardeners will find the practical, hands-on recommendations and tips very useful. And thought-provoking. Especially with chapters titled "Botanical Garden Syndrome," "The Colour of Passion," or "Balconies to Brag About."

Gardening for Comfort

"The Northwest Cottage Garden" is the work of landscape architect Andrew

Schulman, with important assistance from photographer Jacqueline Koch. The author quite systematically takes the reader through the history and intent of the cottage garden style and how it can be adapted for regional architecture and gardening conditions. The basics of design and structure follow, and not until rather late does the discussion move to the plants themselves.

But underlying all these well-considered points is the permission to indulge in a passion for plants. Lots of them. Principles are woven throughout the writing, but the author has a knack for not hitting you over the head, nor denying the guilty pleasure of breaking the rules.

Prolific Ann Lovejoy needs no introduction to Northwest readers of gardening literature. However her new "Handbook of Northwest Gardening" is just that, a handbook filled with more meaty text and less photographic essay

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then several of her more recent works. Not that the photos by Janet Loughrey aren't an important addition, but this is Lovejoy at her most practical with lots of orderly—and nicely side-barred—guidelines for creating a garden that is more pleasurable and less of a taskmaster.

The layout is time-tested and begins with design considerations and basic culture elements, then moves on to plant selection. What I particularly appreciate is the restraint; we are not overwhelmed with selections, and those made are well-described, including consideration of their individual quirks and needs.

Gardening for Elegance

By contrast, "The Jewel Box Garden" is first a visual treat, with the photography of David McDonald to draw you in so that author Thomas Hobbs can use his florist sensibilities in describing each combination of shapes, colors, objects and space. Unlike many gardening books, this one will not disgrace even the finest of coffee tables.

There is considerable emphasis on the use of containers—a Hobbs specialty—with lots of inspiration for plant lovers in small, urban spaces. The images of tropics-evoking flora also excel at transporting you, perhaps to an exotic Mediterranean port, until you read the captions: Vancouver, Seattle, Oakland.

"Gardening on Pavement, Tables, and Hard Surfaces" encourages especially the urban dweller to explore new options for enlarging garden space in unusual ways. George Schenk is not a prolific author but he's always been one of my favorites, taking on topics not already well explored by others.

Like "The Jewel Box Garden," there are many photographs to inspire, but the accompanying text is more detailed and very practical. Schenk is a master at telling the stories of his various planting experiments, both successful and not so, so be prepared after reading to start your own table, stump or railing garden.

Practical Matters

"Cass Turnbull's Guide to Pruning: What, When, Where & How to Prune for a More Beautiful Garden" is a must for regional gardeners. There are precious few good books on pruning to begin with, and no others for this region. This is another that has no frills; but instead, clear descriptions, helpful diagrams and just enough humor to keep you smiling.

So if your rhody is too big, too leggy, too ugly or whatever, here are a number of proven methods to deal with either the shrub or your attitude towards it. About 75 percent of the book consists of case studies for specific trees and shrubs, giving you the knowledge to deal with certainly more than 75 percent of the challenges you're likely to encounter in a typical Pacific Northwest yard.

If some of your garden pets have four legs rather than a trunk, Cheryl S. Smith's "Dog Friendly Gardens, Garden Friendly Dogs" might be just the book you're looking for. Although written for a national audience, the author lives in Wenatchee and her sensibilities and examples are of the region.

This book is good for getting a different perspective on your garden. For example, she asks: "What is a Lawn for Anyway?" Does the dog really care or do you? Following are the many ways that the interests of the gardener and the interests of the dog(s) may conflict, with practical compromises and even win-win solutions. Although I'm a gardener with cats, I still found lots of helpful ideas.

Gardens and Community

Two quite different new books celebrate the community that develops amongst gardeners and the organizations that support that community. "Garden City of Alaska," by Frank Norris, records an unexpectedly rich heritage and tradition of gardeners and their activities in Skagway. Although the moniker of the title was applied in the early 20th century, this account follows the fall and subsequent revival of gardening interest that the city enjoys

today. This is an excellent model of what other clubs or towns could do to celebrate their own important horticultural history.

Of great fun is "Diary of a Compost Hotline Operator: Edible Essays on City Farming" by Spring (really!) Gillard. For any Master Gardener or others who have provided plant advice in a public forum, these stories from City Farmer, a non-profit urban-agriculture group in Vancouver, B.C., will give you much commiserating pleasure and lots of laughs. Somehow, with little fanfare, there's also lots of good advice for the garden-information broker, along with plenty of resources to follow-up for more help.

New Field Guide

After all this time in the garden you probably need a get-away and if you're heading for the San Juan or Gulf Islands, be sure to take "Plants of the Gulf & San Juan Islands and Southern Vancouver Island" by Ollin Varner. This pocket-size little gem is perfect for exploring beaches and bluffs and particularly suited for the beginning field botanist.

A Word From Our Sponsor

Finally, if you haven't already discovered it, this the perfect time to acquire a copy of the new fifth edition of "Cuttings Through the Year." Edited by Joy Spurr, this is the Arboretum Foundation's ever-popular, month-by-month calendar of the best time to take cuttings of woody plants. Updated text and a great new look designed by Constance Bollen make this perfect for the potting shed and the bookshelf of every gardener in your life.

Be sure to look for this, and all these new titles, at the Arboretum Shop at the Graham Visitors Center, or at the Elisabeth C. Miller Horticultural Library. It's been a banner year in the Pacific Northwest garden library! ☺

BRIAN THOMPSON is a librarian at the Elisabeth C. Miller Horticultural Library.

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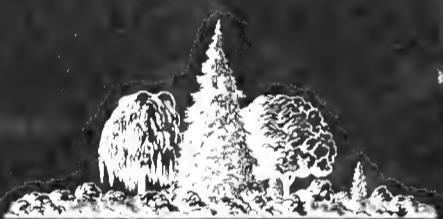
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